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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 DAR ES SALAAM 001090

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E AND INR/AA

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [TZ](#)

SUBJECT: Tanzanian Elections Preparations: Quiet Only
on the Surface

Classified by Pol-Econ Chief Judy Buelow for reason
1.4(b)

REF: A) Dar es Salaam 1001 B) Dar es Salaam 972,
C) Dar es Salaam 908, D) Dar es Salaam 801

1. (C) Summary: Tanzania's preparations for elections have entered an apparent lull, now that voter registration has ended on both Zanzibar and the mainland, the official campaign is yet to begin, and all party candidates have been nominated. Electoral outcomes on the mainland, where the CCM dominates, are a foregone conclusion. The elections scene is like the proverbial duck: appearing to float tranquilly on the surface of the pond, while paddling frantically underwater. The National Electoral Commission (NEC) and the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) are now "scrubbing" their respective voters registers for errors, oversights and duplicate registrations. This process presents ample opportunities for tension and electoral manipulation, especially on Zanzibar, where the elections will be hotly contested. Meanwhile, opposition parties fret about unequal access to the media and the difficulty of obtaining permits to hold demonstrations on the scale employed by the ruling CCM. As electoral conflicts continue to roil below the surface on Zanzibar, the Diplomatic Group is determined to keep pressing for a democratic transition in the isles. End Summary.

Entering Quiet Time

2. (U) Mid-May marked the beginning of an unofficial "quiet time" in the run-up to the October elections. All suspense over the outcome of the national elections ended on May 4, when the ruling CCM party nominated its candidates. It's difficult to imagine a scenario that doesn't result in the election, by overwhelming majorities, of Foreign Minister Jakaye Kikwete and Vice President Shein as President and Vice President, or in an equally overwhelming majority for the CCM in the National Assembly. The NEC and the ZEC have now completed voter registration, on the mainland and on semi-autonomous Zanzibar, respectively. The establishment of Tanzania's first-ever Permanent Voters Registries (PVR) is well underway. In the current phase, the sister electoral commissions are now scrutinizing their respective PVRs, to eliminate dual registrations, and adjudicate cases in which registration was allegedly wrongly granted, or wrongly denied. The official campaign does not begin until August 20. Tanzania's annual official "quiet time," when the entire government decamps to the capital Dodoma for Parliament's budget session, begin in early June. The public might be forgiven for thinking the electoral campaign has entered a lull.

Scrubbing Zanzibar's PVR

3. (U) Nothing is ever as tranquil as it seems, especially on Zanzibar, where the electoral contest between the ruling CCM party and the opposition CUF is close and hotly contested. The outcome of elections on Zanzibar may ultimately hinge on the integrity of the ZEC's ongoing effort to "scrub" the PVR. The ZEC's technicians are now scanning the computer database for potential dual registrations. As voter registration was completed in each of Zanzibar's five regions, the ZEC was obliged to post the preliminary lists of registered voters, to allow members of the public to raise objections to any specific name that does or does not appear on the lists. The ZEC can adjudicate many of these objections itself, but they may be appealed up to the High Court. The challenge for the ZEC (and to a lesser extent the NEC) is to adjudicate all objections, remove any dual registrations, and ensure that the PVR is clean and credible by the time voters go to the polls in October.

14. (C) The ZEC has its work cut out. Observers from the election observation NGO "TEMCO," diplomats, and others saw ample evidence of registration practices that bordered on the edge of legality, or crossed it. ZEC Commissioners expect to find double registrations, especially in those Unguja Island constituencies where registration rates reached 120 percent or more of the expected tally. In some areas, numerous ineligible minors may have registered. Zanzibar's CCM government appears guilty of the borderline legal practice of recruiting pro-CCM youth into the local militias and security forces, then transferring them into marginal constituencies to register. The law is ambiguous on this point, saying only that government employees may register in district "where they are living," without meeting Zanzibar's stringent residency requirements. ZEC Elections Director Khamis Ame hinted that the ZEC might disallow registrations of militia members in those constituencies that have no camps or military bases. The ZEC seems less likely to devise an appropriate response to those Zanzibaris, mostly CUF supporters originating on Pemba Island, who were arbitrarily denied both registration and the opportunity to launch an appeal. (Please see reftel D.)

15. (C) The ZEC is considering the purchase of additional software that could compare images in the PVR database such as fingerprints and photographs. An internal spat within the ZEC over the terms of the contract was quickly publicized and politicized. Waymark, the company that had supplied equipment and technical support to the PVR, had completed a feasibility study for the software, which revealed that, of a sample drawn from the Zanzibar PVR, 6.7 percent of the fingerprints were duplicates. Soon thereafter, the ZEC IT director Salum challenged Elections Director Khamis Ame, saying that Waymark had no contract with Waymark for these additional services. The dispute hit the press, and that Waymark's technical consultants were abruptly sent packing. The British DCM, who is deeply involved in this project, believes that Salum sought to cherry-pick the data Waymark could use for cross checking, so that the new software was not applied to those areas with most suspected double registrations. The opposition CUF was also quick to suspect a conspiracy: CUF's International Affairs Director Jussa Ladhu said that Zanzibar government officials were afraid the new software would uncover CCM machinations to manipulate the PVR, and so had pressured the ZEC to not to adopt of the software. Contract negotiations between the ZEC and Waymark have now resumed.

16. (C) The opposition CUF party clearly believes that integrity of the PVR is crucial to the ultimate credibility of the elections. The CUF party claims it has evidence that shehas in the Urban West Region turned away 9,000 people away from the registration centers, without allowing them to complete the paperwork necessary to launch an appeal. CUF is compiling data on these cases, and plans to take them to court. The ZEC Vice Chairman Augustin Ramadhani noted, however that it would be difficult make a case for registration, absent the all-important "form 2-d" documenting the original denial. The CUF is also monitoring the appeals process on Unguja Island, where the ZEC has yet to post the preliminary registration lists, according to Jussa. When asked what measures the ZEC could take to reassure the CUF of integrity of the PVR, Jussa said that the ZEC should immediately post the lists for Unguja Island, and also purchase the additional image recognition software from Waymark.

Searching for a Level Playing Field

17. (U) Public attention nationwide has now turned to the debate over the campaign playing field, which is decidedly not level. While the media on the mainland is lively and varied, some newspapers and broadcast media are controlled or influenced by the government or the CCM party. On Zanzibar, the few newspapers are also mouthpieces for the CCM. In Tanzanian campaigns, personal contact between candidate and the people is crucial, and massive rallies are an essential part of any campaign. The official campaign does not begin until August 20, when all party nominees are officially announced. Perhaps for this reason, opposition has found it difficult to obtain permits to hold rallies. CUF's Jussa told poloff May 16 that the CUF had been refused all requests to hold rallies on Zanzibar during the previous month.

18. (U) The ruling CCM party, in the meantime, has been using considerable government and party resources to "introduce" Presidential candidate Kikwete to the people. Since his May 4 nomination, Jakaye Kikwete has starred at massive rallies in Dodoma, in Dar es Salaam and in Zanzibar's state-owned Amani stadium, all of them lavishly covered in the press. Opposition parties protested this state of affairs, especially after CUF's request to use Amani was turned down. Even some government officials have questioned the imbalance. The Registrar of Political Parties, John Tendwa, publicly called on the CCM to halt its "premature campaigning." Minister of Home Affairs Omar Mapuri, acting in his capacity as CCM Publicity Secretary, just as publicly responded that as

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Registrar, Tendwa controlled the registration and subsequent conduct of the political parties, but he had no authority over the conduct of election campaigns. Barely two weeks after this exchange, press accounts reported that Kikwete greeted "thousands" of well wishers in Mwanza and raised about 250,000 USDOLS for the CCM at a May 28 fundraiser.

Keeping the Diplomatic Group Involved

19. (C) The US Mission continues to work with the Diplomatic Group, representing mostly western donor countries that have been providing electoral assistance to Zanzibar. Throughout the current lull in elections preparations, the diplomatic group will continue to press for a credible and peaceful democratic transition on Zanzibar, the major testing ground for Tanzanian democracy. The Heads of Diplomatic Mission last met on May 18, where they agreed on an updated version of the common message which they will transmit in their meetings with Tanzania's government and party leaders. The updated, six-point message follows:

-- We speak as friends of Tanzania, and of Zanzibar. We are impartial, and back neither the CCM nor the CUF in the coming elections.

-- A peaceful and credible election is fundamental to Zanzibar's economic and developmental success.

-- A transparent and comprehensive PVR is essential to a credible election.

-- A violent or disputed election will have adverse consequences for trade, investment and tourism on Zanzibar and on the mainland.

-- It is therefore vital for all parties to speak and act with restraint at this sensitive time.

-- Ask if the CCM and the CUF are exploring sustainable power sharing, as suggested in the Muafaka process.

110. (C) Comment: It will take continued effort from the Diplomatic Group to identify and support those individuals and institutions that are still determined to conduct credible elections. President Mkapa's recent stance suggests that he is now more interested in promoting the CCM than in ensuring a democratic transition on troubled Zanzibar. The recent dispute in the ZEC may indicate that at least some individuals in the Commission have lost interest in adopting rigorous measures to guarantee the PVR's credibility. Omar Mapuri's dispute with Party Registrar Tendwa is also discouraging. Mapuri is a Zanzibari who wears many hats, including that of the ranking CCM representative who helped negotiate and implement Zanzibar's bipartisan Muafaka Accord. In his capacity as Minister of Home Affairs, Mapuri advocated an even-handed approach to maintaining law and order during early conflicts over voter registration. Diplomats in Dar have long considered Mapuri to be potentially one of their strongest allies in the CCM in support of a credible, democratic transition on Zanzibar. They now may have to look elsewhere. Et tu, Omar? End comment.

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